

# Engaging Learning through Technology “Hang Outs”



## East Elementary is Making it Happen!



**WE ARE** East Elementary is a rural elementary school, located in the southeast portion of Madison County. It is part of the South Madison Community School Corporation. 816 of the 4,609 students in the corporation attend East. Approximately 30% of students at East qualify for free or reduced lunch.

### OUR STEPS

South Madison believes in ongoing training and professional development. The media/eLearning Specialist learned about Google Hangout through a webinar provided by Five-Star Technology Solutions. Then, teachers have been offered training about how to utilize it in their classrooms and how it fits in with best practices in education. Trainings have included after school sessions, corporation in-services and grade level blended learning workshops.

### OUR PROMISING PRACTICE

The promising practice that we are implementing at East Elementary is the use of Google Hangout, which is a video conferencing tool through the Google Apps for Education. Educators are utilizing Google Hangout in a variety of ways. For example, students in the library participated in the Global Read Aloud program. The students would listen to a book read aloud as part of that program and then connected with other classes via Google Hangout all throughout the country to discuss. Following that program, the media specialist has provided similar experiences for library classes.

Teachers have utilized Google Hangout in their classrooms to enhance critical thinking and problem solving skills through “Mystery Hangouts” in which students asked and answered questions to figure out another class’s location or mystery number. It has provided students with an effective and engaging way to master grade level content standards involving concepts such as place value, geography, and climate.

Google Hangout has given teachers a way to enrich students’ lives beyond the 4 walls of the classroom. One student was even able to participate in the class Valentine’s Day party from home through Google Hangout. It really has proven to be a great tool!

Google Hangout has been instrumental in redefining how concepts are taught in the classroom. It has allowed teachers to connect in ways never before possible. Students can now partner with other classrooms from anywhere in the world to foster communication and collaboration. The enhancement of student engagement is truly immeasurable.

### IN OUR OWN WORDS

“A simple practice of discussing a read aloud has become a favorite activity of students when they are able to talk with other students via hangouts. Their increased enthusiasm in participating in the discussion can only be attributed to the addition of the hangouts. The same is true for those students involved in the mystery number and location games.” – Teacher

“Never before has learning geography and place value been so captivating! Having fun isn’t the only benefit of this practice. The use of Google Hangout ties in directly with the 4 C’s that increase student achievement: Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, and Creativity.” - Teacher

For more information about our school or corporation, email: [jzepik@smcsc.com](mailto:jzepik@smcsc.com)  
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